



CONFERENCE



RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE: THE ROLE OF HEMATOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY



Thursday, 6 June 2024
15:00 - 18:00



Blue Amphitheatre,
University of Nicosia

Organiser:



UNIVERSITY of NICOSIA | SCHOOL OF LIFE AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Co-Organiser:



Mega Sponsor:



PROGRAMME

14:30-15:00	Registration
15:00-15:15	Welcome <i>Dr. Christos Papaneophytou</i> Coordinator of the MSc in Biomedical Sciences, Associate Dean of the School of Life and Health Sciences, University of Nicosia
	Welcome Addresses <i>Prof. Kyriacos Felekkis</i> Dean of the School of Life and Health Sciences, University of Nicosia
	<i>Dr. Pavlos Costeas</i> Executive Director of the Karaiskakio Foundation
	<i>Mr. Charis Charilaou</i> President of the Association of Clinical Directors, Biomedical and Clinical Laboratory Scientists

PRESENTATIONS

15:20-15:50	Educating Future Immunologists and Hematologists in the Evolving Landscape of Medicine <i>Dr. Stella Nicolaou</i> Associate Professor of Immunology, University of Nicosia
15:50-16:20	Immunology and Hematology Crossroads in the Diagnostic Laboratory <i>Dr. Laura Koumas</i> Head of Cellular Pathology and Immunology Laboratory, Karaiskakio Foundation
16:20-16:40	Coffee Break
16:40-17:10	Plasma Cell dyscrasias: From Diagnosis to Treatment <i>Dr. Niki Vyrides</i> Clinical Associate Professor, University of Nicosia
17:10-17:50	Advances in Cellular Therapy <i>Prof. Alexandros Spyridonidis</i> Professor of Hematology, University of Patras
17:50-18:00	Discussion/Concluding Remarks

SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES OF PRESENTERS

Dr Stella Nicolaou is an Associate Professor of Immunology at the Department of Life Sciences at the University of Nicosia and the Coordinator of the BSc in Human Biology Programme. Dr Nicolaou holds a BSc in Medical Technology from the University of Indianapolis, USA, a PhD in Pathobiology and Molecular Medicine from the University of Cincinnati, USA, and a PgCert HBE by SGUL. In 2002 she was certified by the American Society of Clinical Pathology. In 2015, Dr Nicolaou was appointed as a member of the Review Bioethics Committee for the Clinical Trials of Medicinal Products of Human Use by the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee. She is also a member of the Association of Clinical Laboratory Directors, Biomedical and Clinical Scientists. She has previous experience with grant writing and research projects in immunology and science education. Currently, her active research interests focus on two areas (a) basic and epidemiological research relating to food allergies and (b) education research as it relates to the teaching of students in biomedical sciences. She has participated in research projects related to those areas and the projects were funded both by the EU (Tempus) as well as locally (RPF). Her work has been published in international conference proceedings and refereed academic journals of Immunology and Medical Education.

Dr. Laura Koumas is the Head of Cellular Pathology and Immunology Laboratory at the Karaiskakio Foundation, is affiliated with the Center for the Study of Hematological and other Malignancies and also holds a position as an Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Nicosia. She received her PhD in Immunology from the University of Rochester, NY and her research interests include immune cell interactions, immunological signaling mechanisms, immunodeficiency and immune regulation. She has been involved in hemato-oncology diagnostics since 2010, and oversees diagnostic testing and minimal residual disease monitoring of hematological malignancies, namely leukemia, lymphoma and multiple myeloma, immune monitoring, immunodeficiency, stem cell enumeration and other specialized assays that monitor immune cell function.

Dr. Niki Vyrides is a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Nicosia Medical School. Dr. Vyrides graduated with distinction from the University of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj-Napoca, Romania, with an MD degree (Government Scholar) and pursued a specialization in Haematology at the University of Athens, from which she also obtained a PhD degree in Haematology with Honours. She is a Consultant Haematologist with over 25 years of clinical experience, and she practices at and manages the Vyrides Clinic. She is the Head of the hematology department and the ISO Quality Manager for the Vyrides clinical laboratory. Additionally, she was a member of the Clinical Laboratory Council regarding licensing clinical laboratories for six years. In addition to her practice, she has been appointed by the Council of Ministers of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus to several committees, including i) the ad hoc committee, which focuses on the introduction of new medicines of Haematology to the Formulary of Hospital Drugs and on the creation of new protocols and guidelines for their use, ii) the Disability Assessment Committee as an Assessor and Instructor Doctor for the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance iii) the committee for the provision of Financial Assistance for Healthcare Services responsible for approval of patients seeking treatment outside of Cyprus, e.g., for bone marrow transplantation) and iv) the committee for approving invalidity pension provided by the Department of Social Insurance. She has been a founding, active member, and the treasurer of Cyprus Society of Haematology since 2008. Her specialized interests, among others, include addressing anemia and thrombophilia as well as hematology-oncology myelodysplastic syndromes, lymphomas, chronic leukemias, and multiple myeloma.

Prof. Alexandros Spyridonidis was born in Greece and studied Medicine in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. He completed his doctorate in research Hematology and his specialization in Internal Medicine, Hematology and Oncology in the Dept. of Hematology & Oncology of U Freiburg, Germany and awarded the Venia Legendi (Privat Dozent) (1996-2005). He was appointed as Assistant Professor (2006) and promoted to Professor (2015) of Hematology in University of Patras, Greece where he established the “Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit” (JACIE, ISO for clinical trials, www.bmtpatra.gr), the “Centre of Bone Marrow Donor Volunteers (CBMDP)” (WMDA, www.xarisezoi.gr), the “Institute of Cellular Therapy” (GMP certified Labs, www.ictpatras.gr) and the MSc Program “Cell and Gene Therapies: from Bench to Bedside and Good Manufacturing Practices” (www.mastercgt.com). He spent a research sabbatical at NIH, USA working on the clinical establishment of Cell Therapies (2012). The pipeline of his translational research includes the preclinical and clinical GMP-manufacture of academic Advanced Therapeutic Medicinal Cell Products, one of which is currently evaluated in a Phase I/II study (EudraCT-2021-006367-26). He is/was Board Member of the “Hellenic Transplant Organization (HTO)”, the “Scientific Council of the Western Greece Prefecture”, the “Hellenic Society of Hematology” and the “Hellenic Society of Gene Therapy and Regenerative Medicine”. Outside Greece, he is/was Hellenic Representative in European Commission “Directorate Tissues and Cells”, Co-Leader of the RIC-Committee of Acute Leukemia Working Party of EBMT, Board Member of the “Centre of the Study of Hematological Malignancies” Cyprus, JACIE Inspector for Cell Therapies (EBMT), scientific advisor of the Cord Blood Bank University Freiburg and Mentor at the H-Net Masterclass of the European Hematology Association (EHA). He has multiple publications, including a “How I treat” in Blood, and has received numerous honors and awards both national (e.g., Honor Award from HTO) and international (e.g., Van Bekkum Prize from EBMT) as well as multiple research grants in the field of leukemia and cellular therapy (e.g., EU-Hellenic Competitiveness Entrepreneurship Innovation, ELIDEK).